

## Message Text

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12  
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 NEA-10 IO-14 DRC-01 /146 W  
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R 161801Z JAN 74  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6120  
INFO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 1385

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, TS, US  
SUBJECT: MASMOUDI, BOURGUIBA AND THE AMERICANS

1. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF JEUNE AFRIQUE, BECHIR BEN YAHMED, TOLD EMBOFF OVER LUNCH THE FOLLOWING STORY WHICH, HE SAID, IS WIDELY BELIEVED IN TUNISIAN POLITICAL CIRCLES. ACCORDING TO BEN YAHMED, WELL BEFORE THE DJERBA DECLARATION OF THE TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNION, MASMOUDI DISCUSSED WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA THE RUMOR THEN CURRENT IN TUNIS THAT THE AMERICANS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH MASMOUDI AND THAT HE WOULD NOT BE WELCOME DURING THE PREISDENT'S PROJECTED VISIT TO WASHINGTON. BOURGUIBA, WHO, DESPITE MASMOUDI'S ASSERATIONS OF HIS CONTINUED GOOD RELATIONS, WAS NONETHELESS CONCERNED ABOUT MASMOUDI'S ACCEPTABILITY TO THE US, SUGGESTED THAT A STATEMENT FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN MASMOUDI WOULD BE HELPFUL.

2. MASMOUDI IS SAID TO HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY APPROACHED THE AMERICAN AMABSSADOR WHO CONTINUED BEN YAHMED, REASSURED HIM ABOUT HIS STILL BEING PERSONNA GRATA AND AGREED TO TRY TO SECURE THE SECRETARYS ENDORSEMENT. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR DJERBA, BOURGUIBA SET UP AN APPOINTMENT FOR JANUARY 14 WITH THE AMBASSADOR DURING WHICH THE LATTER WAS EXPECTED TO CONVEY THE SECRETARYS ENDORSEMENT OF MASMOUDI. AFTER THE MERGER ANNOUNCEMENT, THE APPOINTMENT WAS CHANGED BY THE TUNISIANS AND, IN

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LIGHT OF MASMOUDIS SUBSEQUENT DISMISSAL, BOURGUIBAS REASON FOR GRANTING THE AUDIENCE MAY ALSO HAVE CHANGED. BEN YAHMED

ADDED THAT THE FRENCH AMBASSADORS MEETING WITH BOURGUIBA  
WAS NOT ARRANGED UNITL AFTER THE UNION ANNOUNCEMENT.

3. COMMENT: WHATEVER THE TRUTH OF THE STORY OR WHATEVER  
THE IMPLICATIONS ONE MAY BE EXPECTED TO DRAW FROM IT, BEN  
YAHMED SEEMED TO CONSIDER IT ACCURATE AND MAY WELL RUN IT IN  
JEUNE AFRIQUE. HE APPEARED SATISFIED THAT THE US, IN FACT, HAS  
NO SPECIAL AX TO GRIND WITH MASMOUDI.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 JAN 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
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